

The Communist Youth and Student
Front Organizations and Their Activities

The Communist Parties represent the core or motor of world Communism. The international front organizations, on the other hand, do not formally profess Marxism-Leninism but are completely dominated by the international Communist movement, by the Soviet Union in particular. They support the foreign policy of the bloc and seek to lead large groups of the population toward the Communist way of thinking and expose them to Communist policy. Populations of the underdeveloped countries are particularly vulnerable targets, primarily because they are less suspicious of communism. In essence, international front organizations of which there are 11 major ones -- all established after World War II -- are to accomplish the aims of world Communism without seeming to be openly or indirectly connected with Communist governments or the Communist Party of a given country. "Supporting organizations" might be a more appropriate term because to support Communism's world-wide objectives is their strategic task.

Among the duties of front organizations are: furthering of world Communism through propaganda, attacking the "imperialist" countries, and protecting the "Socialist (i.e. Communist) camp"; and exposing non-Communists to communism through the pursuit of "compatible" goals. The victims are thus brought to support certain Communist demands; and the Communists build a reservoir of people who will be available or be exploited for further Communist action.

In the youth and student field there are two front organizations: the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), Budapest-based and the International Union of Students (IUS), Prague-based. Both organizations are the chief organizers of the well-known Communist World Youth Festivals (WYF). Most WYFs are held in the Bloc but free world sites are sought to achieve respectability, even at the expense of vastly smaller and "less controllable" attendance.

WFDY was founded as a non-partisan world organization in 1945. The Communists soon assumed control and non-Communists disaffiliated. In 1962, WFDY allegedly had a membership of 101 million from 97 countries. The vast majority of the members are from the Bloc. Details of financial support are not revealed but it comes mostly from the Soviet Union. WFDY's avowed aims are very acceptable, indeed: free education of youth, raising youth's living standard, etc. However WFDY's actual policies are political: it condemns "capitalist" war preparations; attacks "imperialism" led by the U.S., the Marshall Plan and NATO; appeals for support of the peace partisans "headed by the mighty Soviet Union"; calls for ending "imperialist" aggression, etc. -- while not condemning the Soviet Union on the suppression of the Hungarian revolt or on any other matter.

IUS was founded as a non-Communist international organization in Prague in 1946. By 1951, most non-Communists had left the IUS because of its activities in behalf of the Soviet Union. In 1963, IUS claimed to have 75 member organizations. Its membership, too, comes for the most part from Communist countries and its financial support from the Soviet Union. IUS's avowed aims are very noble: defense of the interests of students. Its actual policies, too, are political: against the West and in support of the Soviet Union -- featuring attacks against "imperialism" and "(neo)-colonialism", etc.

Both organizations issue publications which are circulated throughout the world in several languages. In addition, they publish a constant stream of policy statements, declarations, resolutions, protests, etc. through Communist press agencies and radio stations, particularly during and after their meetings.